

Michigan Department of Education
Office of Educational Assessment and Accountability

State Assessment for English Language Learners

Assessment Participation of Students Recently Arrived in the U.S.

Federal rules were recently finalized by the U.S. Department of Education to allow flexibility in the assessment participation of recently arrived students. A recently arrived limited English proficient student is a student with limited English proficiency who has attended schools in the United States for less than twelve months. The phrase "schools in the United States" includes only schools in the 50 States and the District of Columbia. For the MEAP and MI-Access assessments in fall 2006, this applies to English Language Learners entering a U.S. public school for the first time within 365 days of the beginning of the assessment window, which is October 9, 2006.

This flexibility specifies that during the student's first year of enrollment in a U.S. public school, the school has the option of not administering the English language arts (ELA) portion of the state assessment (MEAP or MI-Access) provided that the student is identified as limited English proficient through the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) or the ELPA screener. For these students, ELPA participation counts toward the 95% participation rate requirement for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in ELA. The student is not exempt from the mathematics assessment. The mathematics score will not count for AYP because the student will have been enrolled less than a full academic year prior to the assessment. A student may only be exempt from one administration of the ELA portion of the MEAP or MI-Access.

Schools were previously instructed to complete a form to capture the student information that is required for this flexibility. For 2005-06, schools must have administered the ELPA screening in the fall of 2006 for all ELL new to the United States that were not assessed on the ELPA during the Spring 2006 ELPA administration. The date of entry in the ELPA demographics will be used to determine the students that are eligible for the flexibility.

It is very important that accurate demographics are entered for each student in the Single Record Student Database (SRSD), including marking students as Limited English Proficient (LEP) as appropriate. The student's date of entry into the U.S. should be entered in the demographics for the ELPA screener. The Report Card will pull the enrollment and demographics from the SRSD, and will use the date of entry and proficiency information from the ELPA and ELPA screener.

MEAP Assessment Accommodations

In the State of Michigan, all students are to participate in the state assessment system. For some students, accommodations that are customarily used during normal classroom activities are also recommended for use with state assessments. English language learners (ELL) may be given accommodations for MEAP assessments if the accommodations are customarily used during normal classroom activities and assessment. A list of these is included in the table of assessment accommodations, provided in fall assessment administrator manuals (pages 18-21 for grade 3; pages 20-23 for grades 4-9).

Video versions are optional MEAP accommodations for English language learners (ELL) with basic or lower intermediate proficiency levels in English. Until the English Language Proficiency assessment is implemented statewide, schools and districts are encouraged to continue using their local processes and assessments to determine a student's level of English proficiency. In Fall 2005, videos are available for MEAP mathematics, science and social studies in the languages of Spanish, Arabic and English. The Spanish and Arabic versions are appropriate for use with an ELL whose dominant language is Arabic or Spanish and is receiving bilingual instruction (e.g., transitional, twoway, or dual language) using the student's native language in the school setting. If the ELL program uses a sheltered English or English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) approach, using the video translation of the MEAP assessment in English is appropriate. Schools and districts may still opt to provide their own translated versions for students receiving bilingual instruction in a language other than Spanish or Arabic. Please note: There is no video version for the writing portions of the English language arts (ELA) assessment, as the directions and writing prompts are read aloud to all students. There is no video version for the reading portions of the ELA assessments as it will change the construct of what is being measured from reading to listening, making it a nonstandard accommodation.

Video versions of the MEAP assessments are intended to be administered in small groups, but may also be individually administered. Additional information related to assessment administration may be found in the fall administration manuals (page 15 for grade 3; pages 15-16 for grades 4-9). Videotapes or DVDs can be ordered as additional materials, using the MEAP online ordering program. This accommodation is intended for small-group administration. One videotape or DVD is provided for orders of up to 20 students per building. The assessment booklets for this accommodation are all form 1. The students can use the answer folder that was distributed to the student. Form 1 must be bubbled in on the front of the answer folder. Also, mark the appropriate video accommodation bubble. This allows us to know how well this accommodation is working for ELL and—for Spanish and Arabic students—alerts scorers that open-ended responses may be answered in a native language. All videotapes and DVDs are to be returned with secure MEAP materials.